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Unified Command focused on Safe Resolution to Unlawful Protests

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(Ottawa)—The enhanced Integrated Command Centre (ICC) under a Unified Command – made up of the Ottawa Police Service (OPS), the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) -- has developed a clear and actionable plan to bring about a safe and peaceful end to the unlawful protests underway in downtown Ottawa. As the police of jurisdiction, the OPS remains the lead of this operation to return Ottawa to a state of normalcy.

"Our RCMP officers continue to be fully engaged in supporting the Ottawa Police Service as part of this integrated command structure. We have full confidence in the OPS leadership, as well as in all the deployed officers working collaboratively to achieve effective operational results," said RCMP Deputy-Commissioner Mike Duheme, Federal Policing. "We continue to offer our full support to bring a safe and peaceful end to this unlawful protest."

"The Ontario Provincial Police, along with the RCMP, is committed to working with Interim Chief Bell and the members of the Ottawa Police to ensure we bring a peaceful resolution to this situation and bring relief to the residents of Ottawa," said Deputy Commissioner Chris Harkins, OPP.

Unlawful protesters have been warned that they must leave the area now. Anyone blocking streets, or assisting others in blocking streets, is committing a criminal offence and may be arrested. You must immediately cease further unlawful activity or you will face charges. If you are arrested, you may be released on bail depending on factors contained in Part XVI of the Criminal Code. Officers are facilitating the safe departure of anyone who wants to leave.

"Over the last few days, the Unified Command has developed strategies to deal with all possible scenarios," said Ottawa Police Service Interim Chief Steve Bell. "We will be focused on public safety, demonstrator safety and officer safety. All of our plans and actions will be lawful and in line with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

Police are also aware there are children in the area and are focused on their safety. We have engaged a planning team and the Ottawa Children's Aid Society to encourage anyone with children in the area to leave and bring those children to a safe place. We also have a plan to ensure children are protected and cared for during any action.

The public will be hearing about and seeing police actions in the coming hours and days. It will take time to do this right. We have appropriate and lawful methods to remove anyone who refuses. Every step will be considered and methodical. We ask for your patience and confidence.

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